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Chairperson: Ms. Würtz (Vice-Chairperson) ..... (Hungary)

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In the absence of Ms. Ochir (Mongolia), Ms. Würtz (Hungary), Vice-Chairperson, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 20: Sustainable development (*continued*) (A/65/88, A/65/275, A/65/278 and A/65/485)

(a) Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (*continued*) (A/65/229, A/65/297 and A/65/298)

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(h) United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (*continued*) (A/65/279)

(i) Harmony with Nature (*continued*) (A/65/314)

1. **Mr. Sharma** (Nepal), speaking on behalf of the Group of Least Developed Countries, said that what little progress had been made towards sustainable development by the least developed countries was being threatened by the recent crises, by climate change, and by unmet commitments on the part of the international community. He called for sincere implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, the Monterrey Consensus, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 (Brussels Programme of Action), and for active follow-up to the outcomes of the 2008 Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, held in Doha, and the 2009 Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development, held in New York.

2. The developed countries needed to be more forthcoming with debt relief, market access and technology transfer, and should make good on their pledge to earmark 0.15-0.20 per cent of their gross national incomes for official development assistance (ODA) specifically targeted at the least developed countries. The upcoming fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, scheduled to take place in Istanbul in 2011, would be an opportunity to strengthen the global partnership for sustainable development in the least developed countries.

3. The current crises were compromising the benefits of tourism, which, according to the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, could be a factor in sustainable development.

4. The outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, to be held in Rio de Janeiro in 2012, should reflect the new threats posed by climate change to sustainable development in countries with fewer resources and greater vulnerabilities. A successor agreement to the Kyoto Protocol was of vital importance in that regard. The negative impacts of climate change were hardest on small island developing States and other highly vulnerable States. Such States were the least responsible for climate change, but the most in need of resources and technology for adaptation. He hoped that positive outcomes on the sustainable development issues of the least developed countries would emerge from the forthcoming sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Cancún, Mexico.

5. He looked forward to the convening of the high-level segment of the ninth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, scheduled for early 2011,

which had been designated the International Year of Forests. Noting that the least developed countries were also the least resilient to natural disasters, he called for sincere implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, taking into account the special vulnerabilities of the least developed countries. He also called for more political and financial support for implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, and hoped that the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties to that Convention, scheduled for 2011, as well as the 2012 Rio Conference on Sustainable Development, would address both that concern and the need to mainstream desertification issues into development strategies.

6. Biodiversity loss was another issue of pressing concern to the least developed countries, which should be provided with increased, predictable, and timely financial support in order to deal with it. He welcomed the adoption by the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from Their Utilization.

7. A comprehensive approach that included all stakeholders was a must for effective implementation of the sustainable development agenda. The least developed countries were looking forward to the 2012 Rio Conference with great expectations, and he hoped that their input would be taken into account in the preparatory process.

8. **Mr. Aisi** (Papua New Guinea), speaking on behalf of the Pacific Small Island Developing States represented at the United Nations, namely, Fiji, Micronesia (the Federated States of), Nauru, Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Tonga, Vanuatu, and his own country, Papua New Guinea, said that although the High-level Review Meeting on the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States that had taken place on the margins of the High-Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals had highlighted some areas of progress, overall results were significantly below expectations. He hoped that the Secretary-General's report due in 2011 would give full consideration to creating a special category for small island developing States with targeted support mechanisms.

9. The Pacific Small Island Developing States faced major obstacles to accessing international financing, including eligibility criteria that did not match their often small-scale projects and application requirements that were beyond their limited capabilities. He called for international action to eliminate global overfishing and destructive fishing practices; assistance in addressing illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing; and international investment in small fishing industries.

10. The Pacific Small Island Developing States were doing their utmost to be responsible stewards of their unique marine resources. Together with Australia and New Zealand, they were promoting a resolution on the protection of coral reefs, on which a vast majority of their citizens depended for their livelihoods. As members of the Alliance of Small Island States, they sought reductions in greenhouse gas emissions greater than those currently pledged. Fast-start funding for climate change adaptation, which should not be counted as part of ODA, should be delivered in accordance with commitments made at the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Copenhagen in 2009. New funding mechanisms and a second commitment period for the Kyoto Protocol should be major goals for the upcoming sixteenth session in Cancún.

11. **Mrs. Ntyam-Ehya** (Gabon), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, observed that while there had been some progress in Africa in addressing sustainable development issues, poverty remained a major hurdle, with 41 per cent of the continent's population living on one dollar or less a day. Also, African countries' efforts towards sustainable development had been hindered by the various recent crises, by climate change and by unfulfilled commitments to provide them with financial resources, technology and capacity-building.

12. The thematic cluster on transport, chemicals and waste management mining discussed at the nineteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development reinforced the thematic clusters addressed by the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The African Group looked forward to a successful and action-oriented outcome of

the Commission's policy session in 2011 and hoped its negotiating process would be open and inclusive. The Commission should place greater emphasis on actions that would enable implementation at all levels, consistent with the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

13. Noting that the difficulties of small island developing States were increasing, she said that a coherent and systematic approach, combined with the necessary financial and technical support from the international community, would be critical to the effective implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy. The Group welcomed the convening of the High-level Review Meeting on the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

14. The African Group noted with concern that natural disasters were increasing in terms of both frequency and severity. Developing countries, particularly in Africa, were the most exposed to such hazards and the least prepared for them. The African Group fully subscribed to the aims and strategic directions of the Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction, welcomed the adoption of an extended Programme of Action to that end, and called upon the international community to support measures to improve African countries' disaster response capacity.

15. Africa was the continent most vulnerable to climate change, as its widespread poverty severely limited its capacity to adapt. The African Group underlined the urgent need to take measures for adaptation to climate change, as well as to ensure the reduction of global emissions by at least 50 per cent by 2050. Action by all countries would be required, in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

16. Desertification and land degradation continued to pose a threat to sustainable development in Africa. Human factors such as deforestation and overexploitation of the land, compounded by climate change, were turning once economically productive areas into barren lands, with resultant widespread poverty. The African Group was committed to raising awareness of the causes of desertification and land degradation through the celebration of the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification (2010-2020). The Group hoped that a high-level event on addressing desertification, land degradation and drought in the context of global sustainability could be held during the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly. It called on all relevant United Nations agencies to implement the decisions of the Commission on Sustainable Development on drought and desertification adopted at its seventeenth session.

17. Although biodiversity could contribute significantly to poverty reduction, conservation of biological diversity could not be achieved without sustainable use and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from genetic resources. The African Group was concerned that current biodiversity conservation measures were insufficient, and called for additional efforts to achieve the 2010 target on reducing the rate of biodiversity loss. It also welcomed the adoption of the technology transfer and resource mobilization strategies of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention.

18. The African Group considered the outcome of the eleventh special session of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Global Ministerial Environment Forum (A/65/25) to be critical to the future work of UNEP, particularly with regard to the decisions on its medium-term strategy for the period 2010-2013. The African Group called on the United Nations to increase its allocations to the regular budget of UNEP, and on donors to scale up their support to its activities.

19. **Mr. Errázuriz** (Chile), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, said that the Group renewed its commitment to participate constructively in the preparatory process for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and wished to underscore the need to support the full participation of developing countries in all official meetings.

20. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was the sole forum for negotiating a response to climate change. He called on States parties to take urgent action in accordance with the principles set out in the Convention, including that of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. The Rio Group hoped that significant

progress would be achieved at the Cancún Climate Change Conference.

21. The Rio Group called upon the international community to provide developing countries with new, additional and predictable financial resources, assistance with capacity-building and access to technology to enable them to deal with the consequences of climate change. The Group also reaffirmed that the Commission on Sustainable Development should continue to serve as the United Nations forum for consideration of issues related to the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development. The Rio Group would be participating constructively in the Commission's 2011 policy session and hoped that the means to implement its thematic cluster could be secured.

22. He reaffirmed the Rio Group's support for the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to Prepare a Global Legally Binding Instrument on Mercury, its endorsement of both the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing and the Strategic Plan for the Convention for the period 2011-2020, and its particular interest in the Committee's negotiations on draft resolutions relating to natural disaster.

23. As one fourth of the territory of Latin America and the Caribbean, or 5 million square kilometres, was affected by an accelerated process of desertification, the Rio Group supported the proposal to hold a high-level event on addressing desertification, land degradation and drought in the context of global sustainability, on the eve of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly. The region was also experiencing glacier meltdown, sea-level rise, a shortage of water for agriculture and biodiversity loss.

24. As stated in the report of the Secretary-General on agriculture development and food security (A/65/253), without substantial additional investment and better policies in support of smallholder agriculture in developing countries, many of the poorer countries would not reach the targets of Millennium Development Goal 1. The Rio Group reiterated its call for the elimination of all trade barriers that distorted world trade, in particular agricultural subsidies. Local, indigenous and vulnerable groups must have a say in sustainable development initiatives.

25. The Group reiterated its determination to develop cleaner, more affordable and sustainable energy systems; to promote access to energy and to efficient technologies and practices in all sectors; to diversify its energy matrix, increasing, where appropriate, its use of renewable energy resources; and to promote cleaner and more efficient use of fossil and other fuels.

26. He reaffirmed the Rio Group's solidarity with the small island developing States, whose vulnerabilities were highlighted in the political declaration recently adopted at the High-level Review Meeting on the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy. The review process called upon the international community to provide the small island developing States with new and additional resources, capacity-building and technology transfer that would permit them to advance towards their sustainable development.

27. Furthermore, the Rio Group highlighted the need for more efficient and coherent environmental activities in the United Nations system and in that regard reiterated the need to accelerate the implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building and to strengthen cooperation and coordination between UNEP and the secretariats of the different multilateral environmental agreements.

28. **Ms. Millard-White** (Trinidad and Tobago), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy remained the essential blueprints for sustainable development in the small island developing States and had been integrated into their national planning processes. Efforts by CARICOM countries to implement the strategy, however, had been frustrated by limitations on financial resources, technical expertise and institutional capacity and would be greatly bolstered by concessionary access to finance and special treatment in trade.

29. It was shocking that nearly two decades after the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development — the original Rio Conference — the special vulnerabilities of small island developing States were still being debated. CARICOM would again support a resolution entitled "Towards the sustainable development of the Caribbean Sea for present and future generations", calling for recognition of the Caribbean Sea as a special area within the context of sustainable development. She expressed disappointment at the slow progress on both implementation of the Bali Action Plan and the

establishment of a successor agreement to the Kyoto Protocol. Inhabitants of small islands had nowhere to go to escape hurricanes or rising sea levels. CARICOM insisted on ceilings of 350 parts per million for greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere and no later than 2015 for a peak in greenhouse gas emissions.

30. The upcoming Cancún Climate Change Conference needed to demonstrate progress towards an eventual legally binding agreement that would provide legal certainty in the fight against climate change; an agreement that was merely politically binding would not deliver the emissions reduction or financing required. She called on the Secretary-General to act to ensure participation by developing countries in the preparatory process for the Conference, and for regular reports to the General Assembly by the newly formed High-level Panel on Global Sustainability.

31. **Mr. Eggleston** (Australia), speaking on behalf of Canada, Australia and New Zealand (CANZ), said that climate change was among the greatest challenges of the modern age. CANZ supported the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy as important frameworks for addressing the sustainable development issues of small island developing States and welcomed the adoption by the Nagoya biodiversity summit of a package of measures, including the "Aichi target".

32. He also welcomed the establishment of the High-level Panel on Global Sustainability, and hoped that the voices of the most vulnerable, including small island developing States, would be represented in its report. CANZ looked forward to working on the green economy and institutional issues at the twenty-sixth session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum of the United Nations Environment Programme, to be held in Nairobi in 2011.

33. Global coral reef ecosystems, which were the rainforests of the ocean, had long been threatened by pollution, destructive fishing practices, coral mining and coastal development. The new challenges posed by climate change were pushing them to a tipping point. The year 2010 could well be the worst year ever for coral bleaching, and coral ecosystems might largely disappear by 2050. CANZ strongly supported the resolution on the protection of coral reefs.

34. **Ms. Dong** Zhihua (China) said that the international financial crisis had severely hampered developing countries' attempts to achieve sustainable development. The international community should enhance policy coordination to promote the stable and healthy development of the world economy, in harmony with nature.

35. China attached great importance to sustainable development. Under its people-centred sustainable development strategy, it had drafted and amended environmental legislation and set rigorous targets for greenhouse gas reduction. Despite its huge population, fragile ecological environment and the uneven development of its various regions, it was determined to transform its mode of development and build a resource-efficient and environment-friendly society.

36. China supported the convening of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012, and would take an active part in the preparations for it and fully support the work of its secretariat.

37. In order to facilitate the sustainable development of the small island developing States, the developed countries should further open their markets and create favourable conditions for their trade-for-development efforts. Technology transfer and personnel training were needed to help them cope with climate change and natural disasters and should be scaled up. The Chinese Government had continuously expanded and deepened its cooperation with the small island developing States.

38. Expressing gratitude to those countries and international organizations that had provided emergency humanitarian assistance after the earthquake in Qinhai Province and the landslide in Gansu Province, she outlined a number of ways in which natural disaster reduction could be enhanced: first, nations should enhance cooperation and exchanges of disaster information, early warnings and scientific research; second, active efforts should be made to promote disaster reduction capacity-building at the grass-roots level; and third, disaster reduction technology, financial support and personnel training should be provided to the developing countries.

39. The forthcoming Cancún Climate Change Conference should build on the results achieved in Copenhagen and continue to move forward the dual-track negotiation of the Bali Road Map. More demanding quantified emission reduction targets

should be set for the developed countries for the second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol; those developed countries that had not ratified the Kyoto Protocol should commit themselves to comparable emission reductions. Effective institutional arrangements should be made to ensure that the developed countries fulfilled their commitment to provide support, including through fast-track financing. The developing countries needed to take mitigation actions suitable to their national conditions, with support from the developed countries in terms of finance, technology and capacity-building.

40. The international community had not given sufficient attention to the problem of desertification. On the basis of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, the developed countries should provide funding and technical support to those countries affected by desertification. New and additional financial resources and reform of Convention bodies would be vital to combating desertification.

41. The international community should exert greater efforts to step up the implementation of the outcomes of the recent High-level Meeting of the General Assembly as a contribution to the International Year of Biodiversity and tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, and strive for the realization of the international targets on biodiversity by providing funding and technical support to help with the capacity-building of the developing States parties.

42. China supported efforts to strengthen the role of UNEP, promote coordination among multilateral instruments in the environmental area, and provide stable and predictable funding for international environmental governance. It encouraged UNEP to conduct a comprehensive study of issues concerning the green economy and to provide support to the developing countries in the areas of technology transfer and capacity-building.

43. **Mr. Al-Fayez** (Saudi Arabia) said that improved access to energy resources was a key factor in poverty elimination and sustainable development. Saudi Arabia was therefore encouraging private and public investment to expand its energy production capacity. It was also fulfilling its commitment to protect the environment while seeking to enhance the competitiveness of its industries.

44. A balance should be struck between the need to address climate change and the requirements of development. His country took part in global forums on global warming and other environmental concerns, and had made great progress in more efficient and cleaner use of traditional energy sources as well as the development of renewable sources.

45. **Ms. Loo** (Singapore) noted that her country had been compelled to seek its development path in a sustainable manner, as it was a small island developing State, with limited water and natural resources and an open economy that made it vulnerable to external stresses. It had therefore launched the Sustainable Singapore Blueprint in 2009, based on a four-pronged approach: boosting its resource efficiency, enhancing its urban environment, building its capabilities and fostering community action. To guide its efforts on resource efficiency, Singapore had set numerical targets, and had launched a nationwide energy efficiency master plan. To enhance the urban environment, Singapore aimed to provide 0.8 of a hectare of green space for every 1,000 persons, improve walkways and cycling infrastructure and have 70 per cent of peak hour journeys made by public transport.

46. To build its capabilities, Singapore would invest in research and development into areas such as solar energy, and facilitate international sharing of knowledge through global events that it convened, such as the Singapore International Water Week. Singapore also engaged community, grass-roots and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to educate the public on ways to adopt more eco-friendly lifestyles.

47. Singapore remained committed to doing its part to meet its sustainable development objectives and would be happy to share its experiences and lessons learned.

48. **Ms. Volken** (Switzerland) observed that environmental protection was a prerequisite for a healthy economic future. While it would be difficult to come up with a precise definition of "green economy" on which all Member States could agree, a common understanding of the concept should be developed. in Switzerland's view, a green economy should promote clean and resource-efficient technologies, market transparency, sustainable public procurement and sustainable consumption and production patterns. The development of a Ten-Year Framework of Programmes

on Sustainable Consumption and Production and its adoption at the nineteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development would represent an essential contribution to the preparations for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012.

49. While the other theme of the Conference — institutional framework for sustainable development — was closely linked to the issue of international environmental governance, the two should remain distinct; international environmental governance was only one pillar of the institutional framework for sustainable development. The ongoing consultation process under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme should continue, and feed into the preparatory process for the Conference at a later stage. Switzerland welcomed the establishment by the Secretary-General of the High-level Panel on Global Sustainability, whose report would be a further input to the Conference.

50. To develop and implement effective biodiversity policies, a solid scientific basis was needed so that well-informed decisions could be made. Switzerland strongly supported the establishment of the scientifically and technically independent Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). The decision to establish the Platform should be taken by the General Assembly as soon as possible; working arrangements could then be adopted at its first meeting.

51. **Mr. Mashabane** (South Africa) said that, as the custodian of the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg in 2002, South Africa had a responsibility to ensure that the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation was carried out within the broader context of the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and subsequent United Nations conference outcomes. Moreover, as the world's third largest mega-biodiverse country, it had a responsibility to ensure that the benefits from the sustainable use of its genetic resources were equitably shared by its citizens and the international community. Although no legally binding instrument on sharing such resources had been concluded at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Nagoya, South Africa was pleased that the negotiators had managed to narrow the gap on that issue.

52. In a bid to continue to reduce biodiversity loss despite its limited financial, human and technical capacity, South Africa had adopted strict environmental and water protection laws. The thematic areas identified by the Commission on Sustainable Development for its nineteenth session, namely transport, chemicals, waste management, mining, and a Ten-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production patterns, were highly relevant issues on which his Government had reported significant progress despite a persisting gap between the country's "first" and "second" economies.

53. In view of the impact of natural disasters associated with environmental degradation and climate change on vulnerable communities, particularly in developing countries, the lack of progress in the negotiations preceding the Cancún Climate Change Conference gave grounds for concern. The principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities should continue to guide negotiations under the Convention towards a fair, inclusive, universal, transparent and legally binding climate change agreement. During the current session of the General Assembly, South Africa had joined forces with Mexico and Denmark in order to ensure continuity and provide direction in the negotiations. Furthermore, the recommendations formulated by the High-level Panel Global Sustainability, currently co-chaired by the Presidents of South Africa and Finland, were expected to contribute substantially towards sustainable development and, in particular, to climate change negotiations.

54. Desertification exacerbated the challenges faced by Africa, such as food insecurity, and called for redoubled efforts to promote sustainable land management in arid and semi-arid and dry areas. South Africa had strengthened cooperation with civil society to address desertification issues related to land degradation, biodiversity loss and climate change. It was necessary to implement the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the ten-year strategic plan and framework to enhance such implementation (2008-2018); and to take action in the period 2010-2020, which had been declared the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification.

55. **Mr. Abay** (Ethiopia) said that many persons failed to realize the fundamental role played by biodiversity in healthy and functioning ecosystems and

its importance for agriculture, the livelihood of the rural poor, the regulation of local environmental conditions and the prevention of pollution. Despite efforts to boost its economy and annual growth rate over the past seven years, Ethiopia had not failed to pay due attention to the environment, and, as one of the world's major crop biodiversity centres, knew from experience that measures to prevent soil degradation, pollution and climate change were feasible means for achieving sustainable biodiversity. However, the international community should help by adopting provisions ensuring the equitable sharing of the benefits accruing from biodiversity, thereby fulfilling the third objective of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

56. Ethiopia welcomed the decisions taken at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Nagoya, Japan. Although it had contributed little to global warming, Africa suffered extensively as a result of climate change and therefore needed financial resources for urgent adaptation and mitigation tasks, including forestry, and for the formulation of more ambitious plans and programmes. Generally speaking, it was crucial to take an integrated, coordinated and balanced approach to sustainable development.

57. **Mr. Muñoz Tuesta** (Peru) said that the threats posed by climate change to the environment, its ecosystems and biodiversity were a cross-cutting global problem. As a mega-biodiverse country, Peru was highly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change and pleaded for extensive and effective efforts to mitigate that global phenomenon. Such measures should be led by the developed countries and actively pursued by the developing countries.

58. Negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change should lead to a binding, ambitious, effective and consensus-based outcome that reflected political convergences achieved at the 2009 Copenhagen and 2010 Cancún Climate Change Conferences. Such an outcome must include a bold proposal for voluntary greenhouse gas emission reductions by the developing countries, equal to 30 per cent of "business as usual" levels by 2020, and 40 per cent by 2050. Peru had decided to make a voluntary commitment to attaining, by 2021, zero net deforestation of primary forests through the use of non-conventional renewable forms of energy, hydropower and biofuel, and to ensuring full treatment of solid residues. To that end, Peru needed the international community's resolute support, provided through the available financial and cooperation mechanisms. The groundwork was in place for the Cancún Climate Change Conference to establish a green fund for climate change financing, to adopt regulations for monitoring, reporting and verification and for reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD), and to extend of the period of validity of the Kyoto Protocol. As a global problem, climate change required the international community's collective and committed response.

59. The genetic resources of Peru, a mega-biodiverse and multicultural country, were closely interrelated with traditional knowledge available in the country. Such knowledge could facilitate innovative applications, and its use, along with the use of the resources themselves, must be covered by any international regime on access and benefit-sharing in order to avoid biopiracy; promote the preservation, diversity, equitable and sustainable exploitation of those assets; and their use in research and development and safeguard the sovereign entitlement of the countries of origin to such resources and knowledge. Access to the assets in question may not be subject to any conditions imposed by user countries. The recent adoption of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing of Genetic Resources by the Conference of the Parties constituted an important step in that direction.

60. **Ms. Pessôa** (Brazil) said that the adoption of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing of Genetic Resources was a victory for all States, and in particular for such mega-biodiverse countries as Brazil. The adoption of a related Strategic Plan and resource mobilization strategy, with clear indicators for measuring progress in the area of financing, was also crucial. The science-policy interface in the area of biodiversity should be strengthened in order to build the capacities of developing countries for sustainable development. In that connection, the necessary steps should be taken to establish the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

61. The Declaration adopted at the Second International Conference on Climate, Sustainability and Development in Semi-Arid Regions held in Brazil, in August, called for decisive action for the well-being of humans and ecosystems in the world's drylands. The

United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification 2010-2020 had been launched at the Conference. Desertification presented a challenge to development throughout the world, particularly in Africa and in the Latin American and Caribbean region, where the world's most populated semi-arid region was located. Efforts aimed at raising awareness of desertification, land degradation and drought must continue, and action to combat climate change must continue to be based on common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.

62. Brazil's energy matrix involved mainly renewable sources, while emissions from deforestation had been reduced. In view of remaining challenges, the developed countries should commit themselves to emission limitations under the Kyoto Protocol and meet their technology, financing and capacity-building obligations. A balanced package of decisions capturing the essence of the various related issues should be adopted in Cancún.

63. The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development to be hosted by Brazil in 2012 should lead to a renewed political commitment to sustainable development. It should provide an opportunity for Governments and stakeholders to coalesce around an international cooperative effort to assess progress and remaining gaps and to identify new and emerging issues in that area. The event should also lead to future international and national action in support of sustainable development, based on the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. To that end, action-oriented outcomes must be adopted and followed by tangible results in the areas of financing, access to technology and capacity-building for developing countries.

64. **Mr. Shin** Boo-nam (Republic of Korea) said that climate change was one of the most serious threats to sustainable development. Failure to address that challenge effectively would exacerbate poverty. For some small island developing States, climate change posed an existential threat. Contributing to global efforts on climate change, the Republic of Korea had set a voluntary reduction target of 30 per cent of the "business as usual" level by 2020 and had offered to host the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2012.

65. According to UNEP, transforming the global economy into a green economy was a fundamental requirement for the survival of economic and social systems in the twenty-first century. The Republic of Korea, the first country to embrace green growth as a national strategy for sustainable development, had set up the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) in June 2010 in order to promote green growth and a long-term economic development model, especially for developing countries.

66. According to the 2005 Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, species were becoming extinct as a result of human activities 100 times faster than the natural extinction rate. The Republic of Korea, therefore welcomed the adoption of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing of Genetic Resources and of a related Ten-Year Strategic Plan for the Convention on Biological Diversity. The effective implementation of that plan required filling the gap between science and policy through timely assessment and the sharing of scientific knowledge on biodiversity and ecosystem services. Accordingly, at the Third Ad Hoc Intergovernmental and Multi-Stakeholder Meeting on an Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), held in June in Busan, Republic of Korea, many Governments had agreed to establish IPBES, which would bolster global efforts to conserve biological resources and ecosystem services and use them in a sustainable manner by providing key scientific information and support to policymakers and catalysing financing to address capacity-building needs.

67. **Mr. Barton** (United States of America), referring to climate change as a global challenge requiring a global solution, said that all the major economies should take serious action to mitigate emissions. Committed to making the transition to a clean energy economy and to cooperating with countries around the world to promote cleaner technologies, the United States would assume a leadership role in that regard. In that context, it was enhancing its efforts to help the most vulnerable countries, including the small island developing States and the least developed countries, and other nations to adapt to the changing climate. The Cancún Climate Change Conference offered an important opportunity to make further progress, building on the Copenhagen Accord. The United States would be working with all parties to the Convention towards a balanced outcome of the Conference.

68. His Government focused on science-based action to conserve biodiversity and therefore supported the establishment of an Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and looked forward to cooperating with the General Assembly and other United Nations bodies, specifically UNEP, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in keeping with the provisions of the Busan outcome (UNEP/IPBES/3/L.2/Rev.1).

69. As for Agenda 21, since the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Commission on Sustainable Development had focused on promoting tangible results on the ground. The United States looked forward to further refining the themes of the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development during the preparatory process, and to discussing the meaning of the green economy. The Conference should motivate all actors — Government bodies, NGOs, business, civil society and youth — to work together towards sustainable development.

70. Over the past five years, the small island developing States had made remarkable progress towards fulfilling the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation. In view of the significant threat that climate change posed to the development of SIDS, the United States sought to help such States to build resiliency against extreme natural events and unknown future challenges. With regard to Habitat, the United States sought to enhance insight into the forces driving urbanization and the impact of that critical trend and to form relevant partnerships, including with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat).

71. With regard to international environmental governance, UNEP provided effective leadership on global environmental matters. The United States looked forward to the consideration of a series of critical issues by that body in February 2011, including the adoption of its programme of work and budget for 2012-2013. UNEP had made significant progress with regard to its science function, cooperation within the United Nations system, capacity-building and institutional reform.

72. **Mr. Alhashash** (Kuwait) said that international partnership and fulfilment of financing commitments were essential for maintaining sustainable development and achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development distributed billions of dollars to hundreds of countries around the world. His country also contributed to development through the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries Fund for International Development, the African Development Fund and bilateral assistance.

73. Domestically, it was investing over $100 billion in domestic development projects over the next four years, including education, health and infrastructure. His country advocated the use of clean energy technology, diversification of energy resources and the elimination of customs duties on low-emission technologies and equipment in order to reduce harm to the environment. To that same end, it provided countries with state-of-the-art technology for use in the exploration, refinement and burning of oil. He expressed the hope that the upcoming Cancún Climate Change Conference would result in a binding agreement that substantially lowered greenhouse gas emissions.

74. **Mr. Zdorov** (Belarus) said that his country was endeavouring to contribute to the solution of the global problems of sustainable development, including climate change. It appealed to all States parties to the Kyoto Protocol which had not yet done so to expedite their domestic procedures for acceptance of the amendment to annex B establishing the assumption by Belarus of a quantified commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

75. The negotiations on a new climate change agreement must produce a long-term solution and serve the interests of all parties. A Belarusian proposal sought to simplify the procedure for adoption of amendments to the annexes of the Kyoto Protocol, by reducing the gap between the first and subsequent commitment periods. Another proposal by Belarus would increase countries' potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by including in the flexibility mechanisms projects for the restoration and conservation of degraded forests and swamps.

76. The new climate agreement must be fair to all countries and groups of countries and the procedures must not erect an insurmountable obstacle to countries that had decided to make a quantified commitment to limiting or reducing emissions. Belarus looked forward

to a successful Climate Change Conference in Mexico in November and December.

77. Belarus supported the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and was consistently fulfilling its commitment to achieving the MDG concerning education. It would be submitting its voluntary national report on that subject to the Economic and Social Council in 2011. There was scope for increasing cooperation between middle-income and developing countries in the area of education and training of experts to assist in the attainment of the MDGs. Belarus was prepared to work with developing countries along those lines.

78. **Mr. Rodríguez Hernández** (Cuba) said that the commonly agreed goals regarding environmental sustainability were far from achieved, as the recent MDG summit, High-level Event on Biodiversity and Mauritius Strategy Review Meeting, held in September, had shown. Some small island States might even disappear as a result of climate change and their particular vulnerabilities. And yet the developing countries continued to be constrained by a lack of new and additional financial resources, the failure of developed countries to fulfil their ODA commitments and limited access to new technologies on favourable terms. It had been apparent during the negotiation of the outcome document of the MDG Summit that the wealthy countries, owners of the resources, technology and know-how, continued to lack the political will necessary for reversing the current critical situation through the transformation of economically and environmentally unsustainable consumption and production patterns.

79. The developed countries were the economies mainly responsible for climate change, which constituted a potential risk to the existence of the human species. That historical debt should be settled equitably and in accordance with the principle of shared but differentiated responsibilities and the principles and commitments set out in the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol.

80. The quantified and binding emission reduction commitments undertaken by the developed countries must be even more ambitious. The forthcoming Cancún Climate Change Conference would be a test of their political will. Would they seize a fresh opportunity to reach a binding agreement or would the ambitions of a handful of countries bring on the destruction of the planet? It was imperative to take steps for the prevention, reduction and control of pollution resulting from gas emissions, for the promotion of renewable energies and for enhanced energy efficiency. In that context, Cuba supported the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, to be held 20 years after the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development had been organized in Rio de Janeiro, in order to review progress in implementing the commitments made at that event. As the main mechanism for following up on the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, the Commission on Sustainable Development provided the appropriate framework for ensuring the necessary balance between economic development, social development, and environmental protection.

81. Without legitimate and selfless international cooperation, especially between the North and the South, and without political resolve, it would not be possible to progress towards sustainable development.

82. **Ms. Esposito** (Plurinational State of Bolivia) said that the combined financial, climatic and energy crises seemed to indicate that a capitalist cycle had reached its limits. The current economic model was conducive to overaccumulation and overconsumption in the industrialized countries, causing environmental degradation everywhere. Whether in the form of loss of species, acidification of the seas, melting of glaciers and desertification, the developed nations' exponential growth was close to exceeding the Earth's global capacity to the point of no return. Such growth was untenable in a finite world.

83. It was therefore urgent to rethink the development model and to take another route which would enable human beings to live in harmony with nature. They should accept that they lived on a finite planet and development could not be infinite but was restricted by the regenerative capacity of the planet and nature. The aim should be to satisfy fundamental human needs while causing the least possible damage to Mother Earth.

84. The United Nations should develop suitable indicators and monitoring mechanisms and design development strategies and policies reflecting the constraints in question. As a purely quantitative economic indicator, the gross domestic product (GDP) could not measure the impact of current consumption

on nature and on future generations. Complementary indicators should be devised in order to take into account nature's deterioration as a result of economic growth. Sustainable development must ensure growth in harmony with nature. Such harmony was impossible without equity among human beings and respect for the right to life of animals, plants, rivers and glaciers. The planet could exist without human beings, but human beings could not live without Mother Earth. Accordingly, Nature's rights should be recognized within the context of an extensive debate on alternatives for restoring the balance with Mother Earth.

85. Attempts to regulate the impact of human activity on nature through market mechanisms could only aggravate the environmental situation. Any plan to repair damage to biodiversity must recognize the States' sovereign entitlement to their natural resources. The United Nations must acknowledge the rights of indigenous peoples, and in particular their right to land ownership.

86. His delegation proposed the establishment of an International Tribunal of Environmental and Climatic Justice to prosecute crimes against Nature.

87. **Ms. Urawadee Sriphiromya** (Thailand) said that the adoption of the Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing of Genetic Resources in Nagoya and of the related ten-year Strategic Plan for the Convention was a key milestone.

88. The development paradigm that had prevailed since the Industrial Revolution was now reaching an environmental dead end. Oil dependence and wasteful lifestyles had generated severe social and environmental costs. A new development paradigm for sustained, inclusive and equitable growth should be developed, complete with trade-offs to achieve sustainable production and consumption and to address water and energy scarcities. Such a paradigm could be discussed at the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development along with other innovative ideas, including the green economy, in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication. Thailand's people-centred "sufficiency economy" had helped the country to recover from the financial disaster caused in 1997 by greed-driven growth. The green economy was viewed as a means of generating growth and enhancing competitiveness as the country moved towards a low-carbon and knowledge-based society.

89. International environmental governance reform was aimed at greater coherence, better coordination and more effective responses to a growing range of environmental challenges. The recommendations of the consultative group of ministers or high-level representatives to the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) would form a valuable basis for discussing the institutional framework for sustainable development at the 20-year review conference in Rio.

90. Enhanced partnerships were required at all levels in order to provide developing countries with access to appropriate technology and technical knowledge in the face of climate change. Greater South-South and triangular cooperation would help such countries to implement their development programmes. Thailand's development cooperation programmes focused on agricultural development, health services, and human resources development.

91. **Mr. Weisleder** (Costa Rica) said that his country, a member of the newly formed Green Group, was committed to sustainable development, which implied an incessant search for answers and creative solutions, and to the protection of natural resources. He stressed the vital role of multilateralism in dealing with both those issues. International cooperation, combined with the efforts of individual countries, must be the response to environmental threats. Costa Rica supported the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

92. Costa Rica's commitment to sustainable human development dated back to the nineteenth century, when it had taken steps to ensure equitably shared economic growth; democracy, peace and human development; and the preservation of nature. As a result of that long environmental culture and visionary policies of its Presidents in the second half of the twentieth century, protected areas accounted for 28 per cent of the national territory and 85 per cent of the country's electricity came from renewable sources. Other initiatives had been taken in the areas of water management, forestry incentives, and energy-saving waste disposal through public-private cooperation. Costa Rica advocated energy policies based on the principles of sustainability and universal access. It supported the work of the Second Committee in defining cooperation strategies, building national

capacities and transferring technology to the least developed countries in order to help them set up more nature-friendly energy grids. Much remained to be done at the national and international levels in order to reduce the costs of renewable energy.

93. Costa Rica, which had been awarded the Future Policy Award 2010 by the World Future Council and the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity in Nagoya, had demonstrated that it was possible to deal with environmental degradation and poverty at the same time, and that the developing countries could contribute creatively and decisively to the solution of problems stemming from climate change. Resolve and readiness to act were required in order to ensure success at the Cancún Climate Change Conference.

94. **Mr. Sumi** (Japan) said that Japan welcomed the adoption of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing and the Aichi target at the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, which it had hosted. It was also pleased that the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety had been simultaneously adopted at the related fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol.

95. Japan proposed adopting a resolution to establish a United Nations Decade on Biodiversity, which would coincide with the period covered by the related Strategic Plan for the Convention and would create a strong synergy with the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification. Japan also called on the Second Committee to adopt a resolution on the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) during the current session of the General Assembly.

96. Having pledged in Copenhagen to reduce its emissions, by 2020, to 25 per cent below the 1990 level, Japan would continue to cooperate towards adopting a new, comprehensive and legally binding climate change document at the Cancún Conference. Having hosted in Nagoya, during the previous week, the Ministerial Meeting on the REDD-plus Partnership to promote reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, Japan would continue to support developing countries, especially small island developing States and African countries, which were vulnerable to the negative impact of climate change and were seeking to reduce emissions.

97. As it attached considerable importance to dialogue with small island developing States, Japan had hosted the Ministerial Interim Meeting of the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in October and had provided relevant assistance in the areas of the environment, climate change, health and education, including a significant contribution to the Pacific Island Forum under the Pacific Environment Community Fund. In September, Japan had hosted the Second Japan-CARICOM Ministerial Conference to discuss future cooperation in overcoming vulnerability and promoting human security, integration into the global economy, environmental and climate change issues, and assistance for the reconstruction of Haiti. The Hyogo Framework for Action, 2005-2015, provided useful guidance for enhancing community resilience in the face of such events as the recent earthquakes in Haiti, Chile and China.

98. International efforts to halve the proportion of people living without basic sanitation by 2015 were lagging. In fact, the Joint Monitoring Programme of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) had reported that progress on sanitation had slowed down in the period 2006-2008. Accordingly, Japan supported the adoption of a resolution on the follow-up to the International Year of Sanitation, 2008, with a view to accelerating progress towards sustainable sanitation in the "five-year drive to 2015".

99. As initiator of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, 2005-2014, Japan would organize a midterm round table on the Decade in November, and, later, an end-of-decade conference to sum up efforts by various stakeholders and the outcome of the related UNESCO strategy.

100. In conclusion, Japan hoped that the spirit of partnership that the developed and developing countries had shown at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development would prevail again in preparing for the 2012 Rio Conference.

101. **Ms. Mørch Smith** (Norway) welcomed the emphasis placed on reducing the rate of loss of biological diversity in Nagoya. Ensuring food security through the conservation of biodiversity was crucial to global efforts in the areas of poverty reduction and

climate change. As the science-policy interface in respect of biodiversity and ecosystem services needed to be strengthened, she hoped that, like the High-level Event on Biodiversity, the General Assembly would endorse the agreement, concluded in June in Busan, Republic of Korea, on establishing the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

102. As sustainable forest management was a key to reducing carbon emissions and ensuring equitable long-term development, emissions from deforestation and forest degradation should be included in a new global agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. In May 2010, Oslo Climate and Forest Conference had established the REDD-plus Partnership, currently being adopted by 67 countries. The Partnership was aimed at effective, transparent and coordinated fast-start action and financing while the negotiations on long-term finance under the Framework Convention on Climate Change continued. Norway would seek to promote an agreement on REDD-plus in Cancún.

103. As a result of climate change, urbanization in disaster-prone areas and destruction of natural coping mechanisms, a higher frequency of natural disasters was to be expected in the years to come. Climate change adaptation measures should therefore be better integrated with disaster risk reduction in any sustainable development efforts. Although research on extreme weather and natural disasters had made it possible to predict where and when the next event would occur, there was still a gap between such knowledge and what was actually done to mitigate the effects of disasters. Building prevention and response capacities in the countries and regions most affected by such occurrences was crucial to saving lives. Lastly, linking the development and environment agendas more closely would be key to a successful 20-year Conference in Rio de Janeiro.

104. **Mr. Borg** (Malta) said that, as a member of the European Union and the United Nations, Malta supported national, regional and international initiatives for environmental protection and sustainable development. Indeed, the agenda items on the law of the sea and the preservation of climate for present and future generations had been introduced by Malta. His country had also worked to ensure that the international community supported vulnerable countries, especially small island States, in addressing the negative impact of climate change. For instance, Malta had pledged to contribute significantly to the "fast-start funding" scheme adopted at the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference and had made specific commitments to mitigation and adaptation; the week before, it had become an Annex I party to the Convention. At the regional levels, it had joined the Mediterranean Climate Change Initiative, and, with Switzerland, supported the Climate Change Diplomacy project implemented by DiploFoundation and focusing on raising awareness of climate change issues among diplomats and policymakers from small and developing States.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.